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Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A self-sharpening cutting tool ~~having~~ comprising:
a cutting edge made of a first material ~~or materials~~, the cutting edge being coated only on one side thereof with a coating substantially harder than the first material, ~~or materials~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the coating has a layered or laminar microstructure aligned substantially parallel to the cutting edge of the coated side of the cutting edge.
2. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating comprises tungsten carbide or mixtures ~~of tungsten carbides~~ thereof, substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.
3. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating, with a topmost layer of the coating comprising tungsten carbide or mixtures ~~of tungsten carbides~~ thereof, substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.
4. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating comprising layers of varying ~~differing~~ hardnesses hardness ~~at least one of the layers being a hardest~~.
5. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating comprising layers of varying hardness ~~differing hardnesses~~, the hardest layer of which comprises tungsten carbide or mixtures ~~of tungsten carbides~~ thereof substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.
6. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~[[or 5]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is a topmost layer of the coating.

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7. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~[[or 5]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is an intermediate layer of the coating

8. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~[[or 5]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is a base layer of the coating.

9. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~any one of claims 4 to 8~~, wherein the coating comprises layers of tungsten, tungsten carbides and/or mixtures of tungsten with tungsten carbides alloyed with fluorine in amounts ranging from about 0.0005 to about 0.5 wt%.

10. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~any one of claims 4 to 8~~, wherein the coating comprises layers of tungsten and tungsten carbides substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten, being alloyed with fluorine in amounts ranging from about 0.0005 to about 0.5 wt%.

11. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 4 ~~any one of claims 4 to 7 and claim 9 or 10 depending from any one of claims 4 to 7~~, wherein the coating has a base layer of tungsten.

12. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 3, ~~[[4 or 5,]]~~ wherein the layers are arranged in sequentially increasing ~~order of~~ hardness from the cutting edge to a topmost layer of the coating.

13. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a friction coefficient against WC/Co of no more than 0.3 ~~or less~~.

14. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein the coating is produced by Vapour Deposition in a vacuum chamber at a pressure lower than atmospheric pressure and at a temperature above about 350°C, ~~preferably from 450°C to 550°C~~.

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15. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein the coating has a total thickness from about 1 to about 25 microns micrometers, ~~preferably 3 to 12 microns~~.

16. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein an exposed surface of the coating has a roughness of no more than about 0.8 Ra ~~microns~~ micrometers, ~~preferably 0.5 microns or less~~.

17. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least about 2000kG/mm²; ~~preferably at least 2500kG/mm²; and even more preferably at least 2900kG/mm²~~.

18. (Currently Amended) A tool as claimed in claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~, wherein an exposed surface of the coating is ground or polished in a direction substantially parallel to the coated surface of the cutting edge.

19. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a self-sharpening cutting tool, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

[[i)] providing a cutting edge made of a first material or materials; and

[[ii)] coating only one side of the cutting edge with a coating substantially harder than the first material or materials;

~~characterised in that~~ wherein the coating has a layered or laminar microstructure aligned substantially parallel to the coated side of the cutting edge.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating comprises tungsten carbide or mixtures ~~of tungsten carbides~~ thereof, substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.

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21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating, the topmost layer of the coating comprising tungsten carbide or mixtures of tungsten carbides thereof, substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 21~~, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating comprising layers of ~~differing hardnesses~~, at ~~least one of the layers being a hardest layer~~ of varying hardness.

23. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating is a multilayered coating comprising layers of varying hardness, ~~the differing hardnesses~~, a hardest layer of which comprises tungsten carbide or mixtures of tungsten carbides thereof, substantially or entirely free of metallic tungsten.

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~[[or 23]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is a topmost layer of the coating.

25. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~[[or 23]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is an intermediate layer of the coating.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~[[or 23]]~~, wherein the hardest layer is a base layer of the coating.

27. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 26~~, wherein the coating comprises layers of tungsten, tungsten carbides and/or mixtures of ~~tungsten with tungsten carbides~~ thereof, alloyed with fluorine in amounts ranging from about 0.0005 to about 0.5 wt%.

28. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 26~~, wherein the coating comprises layers of tungsten and tungsten carbides substantially or

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entirely free of metallic tungsten, being alloyed with fluorine in amounts ranging from about 0.0005 to about 0.5 wt%.

29. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 22 ~~any one of claims 22 to 25 and claim 27 or 28 depending from any one of claims 22 to 25~~, wherein the coating has a base layer of tungsten.

30. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 21, ~~[[22 or 23,]]~~ wherein the layers are arranged in sequentially increasing order of hardness from the cutting edge to a topmost layer of the coating.

31. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 30~~, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a friction coefficient against WC/Co of no more than 0.3 or less.

32. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 31~~, wherein the coating is applied by Chemical Vapour Deposition in a vacuum chamber at a pressure lower than atmospheric pressure and at a temperature of no less than about above 350°C, ~~preferably from 450°C to 550°C~~.

33. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 32~~, wherein the coating is applied to a total thickness from about 1 to about 25 micrometers ~~microns, preferably 3 to 12 microns~~.

34. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 33~~, wherein an exposed surface of the coating after application has a roughness Ra of no more than about 0.8 micrometer microns or less, preferably 0.5 microns or less.

35. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 34~~, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least about

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2000kG/mm²; ~~preferably at least 2500kG/mm², and even more preferably at least 2900kG/mm².~~

36. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 ~~any one of claims 19 to 35~~, wherein an exposed surface of the coating, after application of the coating, is ground or polished in a direction substantially parallel to the coated surface of the cutting edge.

37. (New) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating is produced by Chemical Vapour Deposition in a vacuum chamber at a pressure lower than atmospheric pressure and at a temperature from about 450 to about 550°C.

38. (New) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating has a total thickness of about 3 to about 12 micrometers.

39. (New) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein an exposed surface of the coating has a roughness Ra of about 0.5 microns or less.

40. (New) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least 2500kG/mm².

41. (New) A tool as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least 2900kG/mm².

42. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating is applied by Chemical Vapour Deposition in a vacuum chamber at a pressure lower than atmospheric pressure and at a temperature from about 450 to about 550°C.

43. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating is applied to a total thickness from about 3 to about 12 micrometers.

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44. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein an exposed surface of the coating after application has a roughness Ra of no more than 0.5 micrometers.

45. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least 2500kG/mm².

46. (New) A method according to claim 19, wherein the coating or a topmost layer thereof has a microhardness of at least 2900kG/mm².